

Greetings to K-3, K-4 and K-5 Parents:

This fall the long awaited day of Preschool and Kindergarten will begin for your child. A typical class in each grade is made up of a blend of first time students, those with previous preschool and/or Sunday school experience and to some an extra year at home enjoying family enrichment experiences. No matter what background your child brings to the classroom, we still take it one day at a time. Our goal is to teach something new daily with a lot reviewing and repeating to build your child's confidence. Playing and centers are also a big part of learning. To help answer some of your thoughts or questions we have put together a handbook of information that you may want to refer to this year.

Settling In

One reason for our Open House is to take the mystery out of seeing the room, their chair and table space for the first time. Often the first few days of school are difficult for both child and parent, especially if it is the first time the child has been away from Mom or Dad. As parents ourselves, we are aware of how difficult it can be to leave your child in someone else's hands that first day of school, especially if *the child* is reluctant for you to leave. Although we understand how hard it is and we are sensitive to what you are feeling, we have found that it is best for Mom and/or Dad to spend a brief time dropping the child off, snap some pictures, then leave quickly. Sometimes parents feel that it is helpful to stay until the child feels "settled" but usually it does not get any easier for the child if you stay, and probably just prolongs the reaction. We can assure you that every effort will be made to quickly get your child's mind off of your absence once you leave. If you feel the need to stay in the building a while, please use that time to turn in any paperwork in the business office. After a short time you can peek in the door glass as you leave the building. Once you are home and still need to know how things are going, please feel free to call the office (753-2255) and ask the secretary to come and check with us. Everything will be done to comfort them. We can also assure you that should any student continue to cry and have trouble settling down after an appropriate amount of time, we will most definitely let you know with a call. We will be happy to assist you and your child in any way needed during this transition period.

After a month many parents still wish to accompany their children inside in the morning. Although parents are welcome to do so, students are expected to do certain things on their own when they arrive each morning. Often parents feel that they are helping by putting away backpacks, hanging up coats, and depositing folders for their children, but these are jobs for the students and are meant to teach them responsibility. Reminders are all right the first couple weeks of school, but after that children are able to do these things on their own if given the independence to do so. Please keep this in mind if you are "walking in" with your child.

Purpose/Mission Statement

Honoring the power and grace of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, we at Great River Christian School are dedicated to providing positive Christian based learning experiences for 3,4 and 5 year old children.

We believe:

- Every child is important and needs to feel he has worth and value in God's eyes.
- Every child has individual needs and God-given abilities.
- Every child should be able to progress at his/her own rate to show work at their achievement level.
- Parents are a student's first teacher and we will partner with them to continue the education opportunities.

Philosophy

We strive to help your child put their trust in:

- The Lord's will in all situations
- Their parents who love them
- Their teachers who support them

We will do this by working towards:

- Obedience
- Sharing
- Taking turns
- Being a friend
- Coping with life's ups and downs.

Early training is the most significant training children receive. An early childhood experience permeated by Christianity provides children with added richness. Not only are their mental, emotional, social and physical needs recognized but also their spiritual needs. Our desired goal is to partner with parents to raise up children with well-rounded Christian personalities who acknowledge the daily presence of Christ in their lives.

Admission Policy & Fees

Great River Christian School & Preschool admits students of any race, color, or national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of the educational process, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, or other school-administered programs.

Children who have previously attended GRCS will be given the first opportunity for enrollment.

Second priority will be given to siblings of enrolled students.

Enrollment for new students will be based on a first come, first serve basis by the Director.

A \$50 non-refundable registration fee is due upon registration along with the family, medical and contract registration forms. Your child's spot is secure once you have submitted your \$50 (new students only) and filled out your financial contract and submitted it to the business office. The remaining forms must be submitted as soon as possible and/or before the start of school. Before school starts in the fall the student's immunization record and recent physical forms must be turned in. The business office will order your child's books for you. In order to retain your child's place in preschool, the first month's tuition, books fees, and activity fee (all non-refundable) must be paid by July 1st. If not paid by July 1st, your child's place will be forfeited to the next family on our waiting list. Tuition payments are due on the 13th of each month. If payment is not received by the 13th of the month, a \$35 late fee will be automatically assessed. Any account that is 30 days late will go before the School Board for review. A fee of \$25 will be assessed for any returned check.

Late Enrollment

Students enrolled after the first day of school will be billed by the number of days of instruction left in the school year. This pro-rated amount can then be divided by how many months are remaining to develop a payment plan through May.

Early Withdrawal

Tuition will be pro-rated to the date of departure. Any remaining balances will be due to the school immediately.

Pastor Discount

A 10% tuition discount is offered to those whose primary vocation is full time ministry.

Readiness for K-3 Preschoolers

- Child needs to be 3 yrs. old by September 15th. They may still sign up for a 3 yr old class once they turn 3 between Sept. 15–Dec. 31st. After January 1st we ask that they wait until the following fall term.
- Child needs to be potty-trained and working towards independence with being able to wipe themselves and pull up pants.
- Child needs to be willing to help clean-up after playtime.
- Child needs to be willing to help with throwing their trash away after snack.
- Child needs to be willing to sit and listen for 10 minute segments of time at table with teacher and students.
- Parting from parents is always hard. The best way to establish good-bye from the beginning of school is to keep it short with a good-bye and then leave quickly. If a child continues to cry for a longer period than normal, you will be called. The majority of time, the crying stops and they get interested in something else when the parent leaves.

Pre-Kindergarten Readiness K-4 & 5's

The following readiness list is meant to give parents some ideas of how their child may or may not be ready to enroll in our Pre-K program. This program is similar to public kindergarten with semi-structured learning opportunities. We recognize that children develop at their own pace by maturing through observation of their peers, consistency, and boundaries. Yet having some of the basics down will go a long ways toward their successful pre-kindergarten experience.

- Child must be 4 years of age on or before September 15th the fall of their enrollment.
- Child must be fully potty-trained and independent in the bathroom.
- Child should have improving finger dexterity which allows them to hold writing tools with a tripod finger grip (not a fist grip) and follow lines.
- Child should be able to hold scissors and cut simple lines with a little assistance.
- At the beginning of the year child should be able to recognize most of the letters of the alphabet
- Child should be able to recognize his or her own name.
- Child can count and recognize numbers 1-10
- Child should be able to put on their own coats, hang up their own back pack and is working towards learning to tie their shoes.
- Child should be able to sit for short periods of time to listen to stories and follow simple directions.
- Child should be willing to pick up toys when asked and participate in group settings.
- Child should be willing to manage intense emotions, understand right from wrong and that consequences follow negative behavior.

Days and Hours of Operation

GRCS starts in the fall the day after Labor Day in September.

GRCS ends in the spring the Friday before Memorial weekend.

Each K-3 class is licensed for 8 students to one teacher. Each K-4 is licensed for 12 students each.

K-3 students meet from 8:00-11:00 a.m. on M-W-F or Tu/Th

K-3 students meet from 12:00-3:00 p.m. on M-W-F or Tu/Th

K-4 ½ day students meet from 8:00-11:10 a.m. Monday-Friday

K-4 full day students meet from 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Monday-Friday

A new school calendar will be given out on our “ Back to School” night in August or the first day of school with all holiday closings. Teachers will inform parents of their classroom party dates and times. Days missed due to scheduled holidays will not be made up or refunded.

Weather-Related Cancellations:

Cancellations will be sent to local radio stations KBUR 1490 am, KCPS 1150 am, WQAD T.V, sent out to your e-mail and/or your phone by text alert.

In the event of weather related delay or cancellation the following schedule will be followed for our **K-3 students**:

- 1 hour delay: Students come from 9:00-11:00
- 2 hour delay: Students will come from 10:00-12:00
- Cancellation: When school is cancelled due to snow, ice and severe temperature, their class will be made up after the second cancellation. The teacher will schedule an optional make-up day and notify the parents.

Tardiness

The first bell rings at 8:00 for students to enter our rooms. Any student that comes before that time is to be under supervision in our cafeteria either by a parent or our before school care associate. The tardy bell rings at 8:10. Teachers are in a morning meeting daily until 8:00 and unable to supervise your child in the classroom. If you are running late and miss the second bell, stop by the office to pick up a tardy slip for your child to bring to class. Our goal is for everyone to arrive by 8:00, put their things away and be seated by 8:10. We do understand the unexpected slow traffic and trains. You can always call the school to let the secretary know you are running late. If you know your child will not be in school please call the school. Absences and tardies are recorded on their report cards.

The K-3 Mon-Wed-Fri and Tues-Thurs A.M. classes will meet in their room at starting at 8:00 a.m. They have the outdoor west basement entrance to use in good weather and will dismiss from their room in the basement at 11:00 a.m. We want you to use the west parking lot to bring your child down to their room. Any student not picked up by 11:15 will be taken to the cafeteria on Sweeney St. to wait to be picked up. If you have not picked up your child by 11:15, child care charges will start. We need your support to be on time, as we have lunchroom and recess duties.

The K-3 Mon-Wed-Fri and Tues-Thurs P.M. class will follow the same procedure as the A.M. class. This class begins at 12:10. Any student not picked up by 3:15 will be signed into after school care. If the weather turns to ice and large amounts of snow that would prohibit using the basement stairs, the K-3 teacher will meet her students at the double doors up the stairs by the west side of the parking lot. We ask that you always stay with your child until the K-3 teacher is present and do not drop them off or send them down to their room and leave.

All K-4 and K-5 students that are dropped off on the Sweeney St. entrance (that leads into the cafeteria) for before school care, must stay with the supervising adult until the 8:00 bell. Adults are welcome to wait in the cafeteria with your student as well and walk them to their rooms the first couple of weeks. This is the entrance that our K-4 half day students dismiss from at 11:15. If you have not picked up your child by 11:15, child care charges will start. This is also our lunch time for the full day students. Our afternoon dismissal is at 3:10. We will stay with our classes inside the fenced play area until we see you wave at us. On cold/rainy weather days we dismiss from the cafeteria. If you will step out of your car, so we can see your face, we will let your child go so you don't have to walk up to the playground or the cafeteria. If another family member is picking up, they may need to come inside until we are familiar with faces and cars☺. Any student not picked up by 3:15 will be signed into after school care. Our after school care program finishes at 5:30 and you will need to sign your child out.

Daily Curriculum

Each preschool day includes the following: Opening activities, Bible lesson, learning centers, calendar time, snack, phonics, math, writing lessons, story time, and recess. Full day students will also have enrichments of P.E., art and music classes.

Absences/ Late Pick-Up

If your child is in a ½ day Pre-K program and you encounter an emergency situation where you cannot pick up your child, please notify the office ASAP. We will be happy to help in this situation by keeping your child with their teacher until you arrive. Charges will be billed to your account.

Parents are asked to please contact the school office if your child will be absent from class due to illness, vacation, or any other reason. Please call prior to class time if possible.

Confidentiality of Information

GRCS is committed to maintaining the privacy of children and their families. Information regarding your child and family will remain confidential and will not be released, except in the evidence that there is abuse or neglect. The staff shall not discuss or disclose any personal information without the written consent of the parents and the approval of the Director. Parents may request to review any records or medical logs maintained on their child(ren). Please notify the office if there are any changes in addresses, phone numbers, marital status, employment, or medical conditions.

Child Abuse /Neglect Reporting

GRCS is required by law to immediately report any known or suspected evidence of child abuse or neglect to the Iowa Department of Human Services.

General Rules

Dress Code: We want our students to wear play clothes and tennis shoes. Flip-flops or shoes with heels are not always safe for climbing and running on the playground. Cowboy boots can mar our floors and are discouraged. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather. We do have extra jackets and gloves, but prefer they use their own. We also need the child's name placed in all outdoor clothing and all other belongings to help the teacher identify the owner. We do require each student have their own safety helmet for our outdoor recess equipment and to prevent the spread of head lice.

Toys

Toys are special in the life of any child. But sometimes they can become an obstacle at school. They become lost, damaged, mixed up with our toys or used as an inappropriate weapon. Therefore to prevent problems, tears and hurt feelings, we are asking for your cooperation in keeping personal toys at home. We have a nice abundance of age appropriate toys at school ready for them to enjoy. A special toy brought for Show & Tell will be kept in their back-pack until they can share it with the class.

Birthdays

We enjoy celebrating special days with the students and birthdays are important. Birthdays can be as simple or elaborate as you choose to make them. We will put your child's snack week as close to their birthdays as possible. Our classes will celebrate summer birthdays on the student's "half-birthday." (Example: Birthday July 4th, we celebrate with them the week of January 4th.) We do offer a choice of white or chocolate milk or orange juice daily, so you do not need to send up drinks. You are always welcome to come as well and bring younger siblings. Please remember if an extra child comes you may want to bring an extra treat for them. Check with your child's teacher what time of the day they will celebrate.

We also want to make sure no little feelings get hurt about private birthday parties. If you plan to invite the whole class to a home party or all girl or all boy party ***you may pass out invitations at school.*** Otherwise if you need to be selective because of number of guests we ask that you please mail them to that student's home. A class roster of names and addresses is available on Sycamore.

Class Parties

We celebrate four holiday parties that are *hosted by the parents*. Additional parents are always welcome to attend any parties or trips. When hosting you may want to include 'a little extra' in case siblings attend. The four parties are a *Fall Harvest* theme, *Christmas*, *Valentine* and *Easter*. Our class will have other small celebrations that go along with a particular theme or as a reward. You are not expected to help with those unless you want to. We will have a 'first come, first serve' sign-up sheet available during Open House and the first week of school. This allows for any new students that may join us before we send home the schedule. We will fill in the remaining slots with those that didn't sign up. Parties are generally planned during the afternoon. We welcome our K-4 ½ students to spend party day as 'all day' with the class at no extra day care charge.

Each room appreciates having a parent sign up to be the room mom or dad. This 'job' is to call and remind those that signed up of the date, time and contribution for the upcoming party or field trip. More party details come home from your child's teacher around party dates.

Field Trips

Field trips are great fun for your child and their class. We have discovered some tips that make the day successful. When you sign up to help the class on a field trip, we need your attention focused on supervising. This becomes a challenge if little siblings draw your attention away. Therefore we are strongly encouraging you to make babysitting arrangements, so that the focus is on your older child's special event. In some cases we have already had to make arrangements based on numbers of adults and students. Some places are not as stroller friendly as we would like them to be. We thank you for your understanding. Each class decides on their own field trips for the year and a sheet will come home later with that information.

We are sure you are up to date on the laws concerning child restraints, but we have included an update on both Iowa and Illinois laws. For Iowa a child under the age of 6 needs either a safety seat or a booster seat. If they are 6 or above they can use a safety belt, but we want them to sit in the back seat. For Illinois a child under the age of 8 must be in a safety seat. This does include a booster seat that is secured with a vehicle lap shoulder belt system. Therefore we will need your child's safety seat or booster seat (*with their names clearly marked on them*).

Snacks

We have one snack time for our half-day students and two snack times for our full students. Something light is given in the morning so they will still eat a good lunch and a substantial snack is given in the afternoon. The teachers will provide snacks the first week of school. We will use a schedule for snacks, having each student provide snacks for a one-week period. A reminder slip will come home on Fridays. We will be sending home a schedule, which will begin the second week of school. White or chocolate milk or orange juice are the drink choices. Water is always offered as well.

Please make us aware of your child's allergies. A Food Allergy Action Plan paper must be filled out and on file with the school. Children with allergies may keep a special container in the classroom with their personal safe snacks. We thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Please have any large fruits or cheese pre-cut and include plastic spoons if needed for Jell-O or puddings. We do have a refrigerator in the teacher's lounge that fruit and cheese can be left in. Please mark the sack with the class name and alert the teacher 😊. Here are a few favorites:

Sliced fruit (apples,bananas,oranges,kiwi,strawberries,grapes,melon,pineapple)

Sliced veggies +dip (baby carrots,broccoli,cauliflower,celery,cherry tomatoes)

Mini muffins/soft granola bars / trail mix/dried fruit

Applesauce/Pudding/Jello cups/fruit cups

Gummy fruit snacks / Fruit roll-up

Go-Gurt (Chilled yogurt in a tube)

String cheese/ cubes of cheese

Crackers with Cheese

Graham crackers

For the light snacks we recommend a bag of vanilla or chocolate animal crackers, gold fish, pretzels, snack mixes, popcorn, cheerios or other finger- food type cereals. PLEASE NO PEANUTS

Lunchroom

Full day K4 and K5 students are served lunch at 11:10 in the cafeteria. Students that have ordered a hot lunch will have their drink included. Students bringing a cold lunch from home may request a drink if needed and it will be included on your monthly statement. DHS requests that we offer our cold lunch students fruits and/or vegetables if we see they are not included in their lunch. They do not have to accept them, but we need to offer them. Their teachers will stay with their class until cartons of drinks are opened, lunches served and warm-ups complete before they leave for their own lunch. An adult will stay with both classes to monitor and encourage them to finish what they can.

Please help us with the warm-ups. It is easier to send items like mac and cheese cups or Ramen noodles that are pre-cooked for us to simply warm up. We know the students love the Lunchables, but again it takes precious eating time for us to assemble, warm up and cool down items like the pizza. A left over slice of pizza from the night before is easier for us to just warm up. We will be serving pizza from a local business every Monday. Teachers will take their orders on the Friday before. This age group gets 1 regular slice, but bigger eaters may pre-order up to two slices. Our monthly menu comes home before the new month.

Communication

Daily seatwork and school information comes home to you each day in your child's folder. Please read and remove their papers daily. Each morning your child will be responsible for turning in their folders to their teachers. Our all school newsletters are usually e-mailed or a hard copy sent home on Mondays. Any money that needs to be turned into the office may be sent in your child's folder. Please use a sealed envelope with their name and what the money is for.

We will be communicating with you by phone, notes, a monthly classroom newsletter, quarterly report cards, and two parent-teacher conferences.

If you need to visit with your child's teacher to address an issue or concern, we are available at 3:30. This will give us both ample time to visit without interruptions. Please let us know at drop-off time that you need some time with us and we can arrange it then.

Cooperative Teaching

It is developmentally appropriate for any young child to bond with only their teacher and feel their classroom is their 'home away from home.' But as we all know emergencies do come up in life for all of us. There are days when another teacher may have to fill in. We want the students to become familiar with the other staff. Other enrichment classes are also shared at times, as well as recess, lunch, chapel, and field trips. We feel by knowing all the early education teachers we will lessen their stress when we have to put the students together if something unexpected comes up. We have not experienced any problems in the past from this arrangement. We see this as the best solution for them to feel comfortable. Calling in a substitute teacher that they do not know is a last resort, but sometimes necessary as well. We hope you will find this approach the best way to handle the unexpected and know that we always have your child's best interest in mind.

Pet Policy:

When a student's pet is brought to school, permission must be granted by the principal and the teacher before the pet comes. Parents may bring the pet to school during the last 30 minutes of the day. Hand washing before and after handling the pet is imperative. Cats or dogs must have updated shots and be wearing their tags before being brought to the classroom.

Grievances

The teacher is always the first person to talk to personally. If you feel the concern or issues has not been resolved, please speak with the director. And if further help is needed the teacher and the director will be glad to meet with you together. If we can't resolve the problem we will take it to the principal. We always want to settle concerns or issues in a Godly manner and find solutions. Always keep in mind, we can't help fix what we are not aware of.

Behavior

Our discipline focus is on 'Love and Logic'. We use verbal cues to let the child know they are not going to engage the teacher in arguing or whining. Ex: 'Oh, I love you too much to argue with you about that'. This puts the matter back to the child, as teacher turns to help someone or returns to her desk. More serious matters may need additional support by using 1-2-3 Magic: We like to use this system for its simplicity. When actions are inappropriate and disruptive to others a verbal warning of the word 'one' is given with a 5 second wait. If no change in behavior is evident they have a second verbal warning of the word 'two.' Again with a 5 second wait. If no change in behavior is evident we then say 'that's three, take three'. They need to sit in a neutral spot for three minutes. A timer is used to keep track of their time-out. The child is then invited to return to the group or activity, but we will be showing them how to return by apologizing for their actions. If we see repeated time-outs we will keep track with our card system.

Color Cards: Pre-K and K-5 will continue on with this tracking system. We have a pocket for each student, with each containing a green, yellow, orange, pink, and purple card. As long as the green card appears, we're in good shape! If a student is having trouble following several 1-2-3 Magic time-outs, the green card will turn yellow, and so on. Most students get along just fine and problems can be handled at school without further action. However, if problems are serious or persist for more than a day or two, we will let you know so that we can work together to correct the situation.

- Green: Great Job!
- Yellow: Warning
- Orange: 5-minute time-out
- Pink: Loss of next recess or class activity or 10 min. time-out
- Purple: Phone call to parents to explain their actions or speak to principal

Incentives: Good behavior will be encouraged and rewarded in the classroom! Some rewards will be earned by the class as a whole, others individually. The teachers like to 'catch someone making a good choice' and reward them with good kid tickets at lunch, recess, walking in the halls, P.E., art, music and using the bathrooms properly. Each student will have an individual sticker chart or good kid ticket bag. Your child's teacher will use her own system of reward for good behavior. We want to regard the positive as well as respond to the negative.

We want our students to be positively guided by resolving conflict and understanding well-defined limits. That will include positive guidance, redirection and the setting of clear-cut limits that assist the child in developing socially acceptable, behavioral and emotional controls. We strive to be consistent, point out a logical consequence to the action of the child and be appropriate to the age and circumstances.

At no time will corporal punishment be used by spanking, shaking or slapping. Punishment or threat of punishment associated with a child's illness, lack of progress in toilet training or in connection with food or rest that is humiliating, frightening or causes pain or discomfort to the child is not acceptable at GRCS. No child shall be subject to verbal abuse, threats or derogatory remarks about the child or his or her family.

Discharge Policy

GRCS reserves the right to dismiss any child from its program when behavior is not conducive to his/her learning and is consistently disrupting others or becomes a safety issue. Sometimes we see that a child is not benefitting from our program due to immaturity.

We will contact you for a conference to work out a solution. We may need to ask you to withdraw them, but give you the option of an abbreviated schedule or re-enrolling at a later date.

Health and Safety:

Staff & Classroom Requirements

Great River Christian School is licensed with the Department of Human Service for the state of Iowa and has been since 2008-2009. The staff is required to have current CPR and First-Aid training, Mandatory Reporter and Universal Precautions/Exposure certification. We are also required to have FBI fingerprints, a criminal history back-ground check and updated physicals.

DHS licensing allows us to have 8 students in each K-3 classroom. We are licensed to have 12 students in each Pre-K classroom.

Fire and Storm Drills

Drills are held monthly for K-3 and K-4 classrooms. K-5 stays on the all school twice a semester schedule. In the case of fire, all students will be taken to the grass field on the east side of the building beyond the playground. In the case of tornado, K-3 students will stay in their room in the basement (B-1) on the west side of the building. K-4 students will be in the basement foyer area outside the music room (B-2) on the east side of the building. K-5 students will be in the basement foyer area outside the K-3 room (B-

1) on the west side of the building. In the case of an all school evacuation students will be taken to the furniture store on the corner of Harrison and Main. Parents will be notified by text-alert.

Even though our preschool is housed in a regular private school up to grade 12, we have fire and storm drills twice a semester set in place. The preschool teachers will continue to do a mock drill for both fire and tornado every month during the school year.

Child Information

Each classroom will have a binder with the emergency information for each child enrolled in the class. The emergency information will include: the child's name, address, phone number, date of birth, medical condition, allergies, and any other personal information deemed necessary by the staff. It will also include the names of the parents, their work addresses and phone numbers, emergency contact's addresses and phone numbers, persons allowed to pick up the child, the name and address of the child's doctor and what hospital is preferred.

Emergency Evacuation

Evacuation routes sheets are posted by each classroom door and follow the recommendation of the fire inspector.

The office staff will test fire alarms and will conduct periodic fire and tornado drills throughout the year in accordance with Iowa State Laws.

The Preschool will have a working phone on the premises with the emergency phone numbers clearly posted.

A first-aid kit is available in the classroom for emergencies. A first-aid fanny pack is available to be worn by staff and taken outside for recess.

During field trips each teacher will carry a first-aid kit in his/her vehicle and he/she will wear a first aid fanny pack.

Accident or Injury

In the case of a serious accident or injury to a child or staff member, a call will be made to 911. The injured individual will be transported to the appropriate medical facility, and the parent/emergency contact person will be notified. The child or staff member's file will be taken along with the individual. Written permission from the parents to call the physician or refer the child for medical care shall be on file in the office on the emergency release form.

Minor injuries are washed with soap and water and are covered with a bandage. Parents will be notified of the injury upon departure from school. A record of the injury or accident will be kept in the Early Education office in that child's file.

Hand Washing

Hand washing is the single-most important procedure for preventing the spread of infection.

Staff shall wash their hands:

- Upon arrival at the center.
- Immediately before eating or participating in any food service activity, after eating.
- Before leaving the rest room either with a child or alone.
- Before and after administering non-emergency first aid to a child.

Students shall wash their hands:

- Upon arrival at the center.
- Immediately before eating or participating in any food service activity, after eating.
- After using the rest room.

Eyes, Ears, Teeth: Our preschool has the opportunity to have their eyes checked by the Lions Club, their ears checked by GPAEA, and a visual oral check with fluoride swab from a Registered Dental Hygienist. A slip will come home and you may decline if you prefer. There are no charges for these services. You as a parent have access to Great Prairie Area Education Agency for any other physical, developmental or speech concerns and/or delays.

Biting Policy: When biting occurs, these immediate steps will be taken:

- Separate the child who bit and the bitten child.
- Staff will first attend to the child who was bitten and apply first aid as needed. If skin is broken staff will wash with warm water and soap and apply an ice pack or cool cloth to prevent swelling.
- Staff will say to the child who bit 'Biting hurts, we do not put our teeth on each other' by using tone of voice and facial expression to show the child biting is unacceptable. The child who bit will be redirected in an activity.
- Depending on the biters age, staff may encourage restitution by way of an apology or efforts to cheer the bitten child.
- An incident report will be given to both sets of parents. Names of children involved will not be disclosed.
- If the aggressive behavior is not able to be controlled with reasonable staff supervision, or if the child continues to display significant aggression to the extent that another child could be harmed, the child may be permanently disinvited from our program.

'NO PEANUT' Policy: Many people these days are allergic to peanuts and tree nuts. Anaphylactic shock is a life-threatening allergic reaction characterized by a swelling of body tissues including the throat, difficulty in breathing, and a sudden fall in blood pressure. Each year we have students that need an EpiPen due to these life threatening allergies. Reactions can be caused by a single exposure to peanuts, peanut butter, peanut oil or many other nuts and nut based products. We ask you for your support in approaching this concern with a sense of collaboration and caring for the children for whom this allergy poses a serious risk. Please do not send any items containing peanuts to school. It is not just a simple matter of who sits with an allergic child at lunchtime. Any peanut residue left on tables, hands, drinking fountains or restroom faucets could be a danger. You may substitute 'SUN-BUTTER' (made from sunflower seeds) for your child's sandwich as long as you clearly mark the baggie of what you have used. Any 'treats' that accidentally come to school will be put in your child's backpack for them to enjoy on the ride home after school. Our lunchroom staff will also put any peanut products found in your child's lunch in a baggie and given to their teacher for safekeeping. They may also put a note in your child's lunch as a reminder. Thank you for your cooperation.

Illnesses

Students who are ill need to be at home for their benefit and for the benefit of all concerned. Guidelines when making a decision as to whether a child should remain at home:

- Parents will be notified of any fever up to 100 degrees. However if the fever reaches 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher during the course of the day, or the child shows obvious signs of illness such as undiagnosed rash, vomiting or diarrhea, the parent will be called to pick up the child immediately.
- A student developing a fever must have a normal temperature for a FULL 24 hours before returning to school.
- A student who has vomited in the last 24 hours should not be sent to school.
- A student with a communicable disease such as pink eye, strep throat or chicken pox must follow doctor's instructions before returning to school; anything requiring antibiotics requires a FULL 24 hours' worth of treatment before returning to school. A child will be sent home with any of the above symptoms.
- Parents are expected to notify the director if their child develops a communicable disease so that other parents may be notified of possible exposure to their child. The ill child may not return to school until they are no longer contagious, as verified by their physician.
- A child with head lice may return to school after being treated with the proper procedures or medication and are free of nits or lice in their hair.

Medication: If a student needs to take medications during school hours, a parent/guardian must personally bring the medication to the school and dispense it personally or give WRITTEN permission for the office to dispense the medication. None of the school staff will be allowed to administer medication to any student without written authorization; this includes non-prescription (over the counter) as well as prescription drugs. ALL prescription medications, by law, must be dispensed from the original pharmacy labeled container.

Immunization: It is the GRCS Board of Directors intent to come into state compliance regarding student immunizations. By that we mean to request immunization records from parents upon student enrollment and to maintain rosters as required by the County Health Department for their annual audit.

When a family has a delay on their shots, we ask that you sign a medical exemption paper in the mean- time. You will then have 30 days to comply.

In addition, any students who do not have the proper immunizations and their families chose not to have their child/ren immunized will need to have on file an "Iowa Department of Public Health Certificate of Immunization Exemption." This form allows exemptions for two reasons:

- Medical exemptions which must be signed by a doctor, nurse practitioner or physician assistant.
- Religious exemption, which must be notarized and conflicts with a genuine and sincere religious belief.
- Lead testing exemption must have a notarized record on file with the school.

It is understood when and if a pandemic might occur; our school would follow state and federal health recommendations including possible school closings. This may include calling families of non-immunized children and requesting they stay home during this health crisis.

First Aid

GRCS has a nurse in the building until early to mid-afternoon. Cuts and scrapes will be washed with soap and water. Adhesive bandages will be applied if necessary. Ice packs will be used on bumps and bruises as needed. Serious accidents or injuries will be recorded for parents and school records.

Parent Roles and Authorization

It is essential for parents to take an active interest in their children's preschool experiences. We hope that parents and preschool leaders will complement each other, and as a team provide the best experiences and atmosphere for children. Parents may arrange to observe the program at any time. Parents are expected to read weekly school and monthly classroom newsletter, which will include lesson plans and special events. These communications will be placed in the child's school bags, along with any artwork or papers the child has completed. We urge parents to check their children's bags EVERY DAY. Conferences will be offered in the fall and spring, or may be scheduled upon request, at which time parents and teachers may discuss student progress and programming questions. Our teachers are also open to texting information with you. Please make sure they have your cell phone number. Please note that e-mail is not usually checked before the preschool class begins in the morning. Important information such as a change in pick-up, sickness and other serious issues should be called into our GRCS office or given in a written note to the teacher that morning.

Children will be released **only** to the parent(s), guardians, or other authorized adults as designated by the parent or guardian on the authorization release forms. Any **authorized** person picking up your child that is unknown to the staff will be asked to show a photo ID such as a driver's license. This helps ensure the safety of your child.

In an emergency, it may be necessary for someone other than those persons listed on your authorization form to pick up your child. If this should happen, please try to notify us in writing or by phone or text. Again, we will require that these persons provide us with the proper photo identification. We also ask that you provide us with driver's license numbers on the authorization forms so that we can double-check identification. This is also a precaution to help ensure the safety of your child.

Smoking

GRCS is a smoke free environment. Smoking and the use of tobacco products are prohibited in the preschool, in the outdoor play area, while walking on off-site activities and during transportation to specially scheduled off-site activities. Smoking is not allowed within 25 feet of the building.

Unlimited Access

Parents have the right to enter Great River Christian School & Preschool and observe the care of their child at any time. For security purposes, the doors at GRCS are kept locked except during preschool drop-off and pick-up times. If a parent wishes to enter at any other time, a doorbell is located by the office door and the north door off of Sweeny St. and may be rung for admittance.

Please see the attached Supervision and Access Policy at the end of the manual. These new laws ensure the safety of all children and staff at Preschool.

Child Custody / Foster Child

GRCS will comply with any court ordered child custody arrangements. However, we will need these arrangements in writing so we can keep these on file. This includes foster children. We need documentation by way of a copy of a court order that shows permission from the biological parent/s or guardians.

Dangerous Adult

A dangerous adult would include any adult exhibiting inappropriate behavior, bearing arms and/or showing signs of intoxication by either drugs or alcohol. This also includes any person who is prohibited by court order or parental request to see or transport the child.

In the event of the presence of an adult who is deemed by the staff to present a danger to the children or a specific child, 911 will be called immediately. Other staff will take the children to a centralized location, safe away from the situation. An adult on staff will request that the person leave the premises and advise them that officials are on their way. In the event that the person leaves the center before the officials arrive, staff will write down the license plate of their vehicle and a full description of the individual. Staff will not place themselves or the children in danger by attempting to detain the individual.

Supervision and Access Policy

Purpose: To ensure the safety of the children through diligent supervision of the children and other people present in the center.

Terms: Unrestricted Access: Unsupervised contact with a child other than the one's own.

Approved: Has completed the application for, and passed, the DHS required *Background Check* and the *FBI Fingerprint Check*.

Policy Summary: In order to have Unrestricted Access to a child for whom they are not the legal guardian, by DHS requirement, all people age 14 and up must first pass 1) the Iowa Department of Human Services Background Check and 2) the FBI Fingerprint Check.

Therefore:

I. Those who have passed the above checks may be allowed to:

- A. Be alone with a child other than his/her own on center property.
- B. Accompany a child other than his/her own to the bathroom.
- C. Drive children other than his/her own on center field trips.

II. Those who do not apply for, or do not pass, the above checks:

- A. May be with children other than his/her own only if
 - 1) an approved adult is also in the room at all times and
 - 2) has the approval of the Preschool Teacher and/or the Assistant Teacher.

III. A sex offender who had been convicted of a sex offense against a minor who is registered with the Iowa Sex Offender Registry (IA Code 692A):

- A. Is required to identify him/herself to the Director at time of enrollment.
- B. May not ever be in the center except to drop off and pick up his/her own child.
- C. In all other instances needs the written and proper approval from both DHS and the Director.
- D. Is subject to all the laws and statues of Des Moines County and the state of Iowa that apply whether mentioned in this policy or not.

IV. The Preschool Director will maintain and secure all records and forms relating to this policy.

The DHS Required Background Check:

Application is made by completing the center-provided form and returning it to the Preschool Director.

Processing usually takes 14 days.

The cost for this check is \$15 and is not covered by tuition.

When the results are returned to the center, the applicant will be notified.

The DHS Required FBI Check:

Application is made by having a set of finger prints completed and returned to the Director.

Processing usually takes 2-3 weeks.

The cost for this required check is \$35 and is not covered by tuition.

When the results are returned to the center, the applicant will be notified.

